

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NATO 03987

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, MARR, PFOR

SUBJECT: ALLOCATION OF SENIOR MILITARY POSTS IN NATO

REF: (A) USNATO 2434 DTG 261901Z APR 77, NOTAL, (B)
USNATO 3702 DTG 201650Z MAY 77, NOTAL

1. IN THE COURSE OF A CONVERSATION MAY 23 AMONG UK
PERM REP KILLICK, NORWEGIAN PERM REP VIBE AND DCM, KILLICK
REFERRED TO RECENT PRESS REPORTS (SEE PARA 12, REF B) THAT
THE FRG WAS NOT SATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT APPORTIONMENT
OF SENIOR NATO MILITARY COMMAND ASSIGNMENTS, AND WAS SEEK-
ING ADDITIONAL BILLETS FOR GERMAN OFFICERS, AND SAID THAT
UK DELEGATION HAD DETERMINED SOURCE OF STORY TO HAVE BEEN
MAY 17 BACKGROUND PRESS BRIEFING GIVEN BY FRG MOD LEBER.
KILLICK SPECULATED THAT LEBER MAY HAVE BEEN UNDER PRESSURE
FROM FRG MILITARY TO "GO PUBLIC" WITH THE ISSUE, WHICH
KILLICK NOTED HAD BEEN LONG FESTERING AMONG SENIOR FRG
MILITARY OFFICERS.

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2. VIBE SAID THAT THE MATTER WAS OF CONSIDERABLE IMPOR-
TANCE TO NORWAY AND AGREED WITH KILLICK'S VIEW THAT IT
WAS INCONCEIVABLE THAT THE CINCNORTH POSITION, FOR EXAMPLE,
COULD BE FILLED FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE BY A GERMAN.
VIBE BELIEVED SIMILAR CONSTRAINTS WOULD APPLY TO THE
NOMINATION OF ALL SENIOR GERMAN OFFICERS TO AFNORTH OR
OTHER ACTIVITIES DIRECTLY INVOLVING THE NORTHERN REGION.

3. DCM NOTED THAT RECENT PROPOSAL FOR A MILITARY COMMITTEE NATO COMMAND STRUCTURE REVIEW HAD BEEN SHELVED BY PERM REPS (SEE REF A) AND THAT THE ISSUES INVOLVED WERE SUFFICIENTLY SENSITIVE TO WARRANT THEIR BEING ADDRESSED ON A BILATERAL OR LIMITED MULTILATERAL BASIS RATHER THAN IN FORMAL, OPEN NATO FORA AT THIS STAGE. BOTH KILLICK AND VIBE AGREED, AND THE FORMER SAID HE PLANNED TO DISCUSS THE MATTER SOON WITH FRG PERM REP PAULS IN ORDER TO TRY TO DISCERN THE EXTENT OF FRG CONCERN. HE SURMISED THAT, IF LEBER'S STATEMENT WAS ENOUGH TO PLACATE THE GERMAN MILITARY, NO FURTHER ACTION MAY BE CONTEMPLATED BY THE FRG.

4. KILLICK ALSO SAID HE HAD HEARD OF THE POSSIBLE COLLOCATION OF EUCOM AND SHAPE, WHICH MIGHT OPEN THE CHIEF OF STAFF JOB AT SHAPE TO AN FRG OFFICER IN DUE COURSE. DCM RESPONDED THAT COLLOCATION WAS ONLY UNDER PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATION BY THE US. KILLICK VOLUNTEERED THAT SACEUR'S CHIEF OF STAFF WOULD NEED TO CONTINUE TO BE AN AMERICAN OFFICER UNLESS AND UNTIL ANOTHER SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICER WAS AVAILABLE NEARBY TO ASSIST IN HANDLING NUCLEAR MATTERS.

5. VIBE NOTED THAT HIS AUTHORITIES WOULD WISH TO EXAMINE VERY CAREFULLY ANY PROPOSALS FOR CHANGING THE ALLOCATION OF SENIOR COMMAND POSITIONS AMONG ALLIES. KILLICK SAID THAT HIS AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT INSIST ON RETAINING THE NUMBER OF POSITIONS THE UK NOW HAS, BUT HE ADDED ALSO SOMEWHAT DISINGENUOUSLY THAT, EVEN IF POSITIONS WERE OPEN TO OTHER NATIONALITIES, IT WAS NOT ASSURED THAT GERMANS

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WOULD BE SELECTED. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE POINTED SPECIFICALLY TO THE REJECTION OF A RECENT FRG CANDIDATE FOR THE DIRECTORSHIP OF NICSMA, WHEN A BRITISH OFFICER WAS CHOSEN OVER A GERMAN WHOSE CREDENTIALS WERE UNIMPRESSIVE.

6. COMMENT: LEBER'S STATEMENT HAS GIVEN NEW PROMINENCE TO THIS ISSUE THAT PROMISES TO CONTINUE TO BE A SOURCE OF IRRITATION IN THE FRG'S RELATIONS WITH THE ALLIES. IN THE ABSENCE OF PROSPECTS FOR AN EARLY SOLUTION, WE SUGGEST KEEPING THE MATTER UNDER CONTROL BY PURSUING THE LINE THAT, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, DISCUSSIONS OF IT SHOULD BE CONDUCTED ON A BILATERAL BASIS AND PARTICULARLY WITH SACEUR, WHO IS IN THE BEST POSITION TO SERVE AT THIS STAGE AS A POINT FOR REGISTERING NATIONAL VIEWS. WE WOULD PREFER NOT TO SEE THE ISSUE RAISED IN THE MILITARY COMMITTEE BECAUSE MULTILATERAL DEBATE COULD EXACERBATE THE ISSUES, A POINT RECOGNIZED BY THE MILITARY COMMITTEE ITSELF IN PROPOSING THAT ITS COMMAND STRUCTURE REVIEW BE UNDERTAKEN BY A COMMITTEE OF "WISE MEN" REPORTING TO THE MC. DEPENDING

UPON INFORMATION DEVELOPED BY SACEUR, DISCUSSIONS MIGHT
THEN BE CONTINUED WITH SYG LUNS ON POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS.
UNTIL PROSPECTS ARE CLEARER, HOWEVER, WE WOULD NOT RECOM-
MEND RAISING THE ISSUE WITH LUNS.BENNETT

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